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ADT- 00341/86

23 JAN 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

FROM: Robert M. Gates
Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Inspection Report of Foreign Broadcast
Information Service (FBIS)

1. We have reviewed the draft inspection report on FBIS, and detailed comments are provided in the attachment to this memorandum. In general, we endorse the two recommendations in Chapter IX concerning foreign TV collection.

2. With respect to Recommendation 21a, which calls for me to establish a joint DI-FBIS task force to review foreign TV collection requirements, I am prepared to do this in the very near future. I would assign the task to the Director of Central Reference who, together with the Director of Foreign Broadcast Information Service, would develop the scope and timing of the study. Regarding Recommendation 21b which precludes FBIS expansion of TV collection until the task force report is completed, I support this proposal as long as we assume that FBIS has the flexibility to alter existing collection assets in response to a time urgent requirement from the DI. Lastly, I concur with your suggestion in Chapter VIII (Page 53) calling for a "formal memorandum of agreement" between OCR and FBIS to define responsibilities for each office in the acquisition of foreign data bases.

3. If you have any questions or wish to pursue any issue, please contact [redacted] Director of Central Reference.

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Robert M. Gates

Attachment

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Distribution:

- Original - Addressee
- 1 - DDI
- 1 - C/LDSD/OCR
- 1 - C/VMB/LDSD/OCR
- 3 - OD/OCR

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AttachmentComments on IG Report of FBIS

Page 53, Paragraph 3: We support the suggestion that OCR and FBIS develop a memorandum of agreement specifying the responsibilities of each office in the acquisition of foreign data bases.

Page 58, Paragraph 4: Forty-eight hours has come to be the optimum delivery time. The tapes frequently arrive in OCR (for Cable Grid distribution) later than that.

Using the average of 1.4 analysts who viewed screenings from the Five Cities Project is misleading. That number accounted only for OCR theater attendance for each tape. In contrast to your assumption, we believe many more DI analysts have made use of the Cable Grid system and viewed and recorded the tapes remotely. (By July the Cable Grid serviced 44 areas of the Directorate; that number has now increased to 66.)

Page 59, Paragraph 2: This paragraph, in our view, does not attach sufficient value to timely foreign TV. The details provided in the FBIS translations are very useful, but they do not provide atmospherics that are an intrinsic part of TV. That extra dimension combined with timeliness makes TV a potentially useful source of information.

Page 59, Paragraph 2, last sentence: Although this sentence is not incorrect, it needs to be amplified. Based on four months of real-time TV, the DI has found that the medium has been especially valuable during fast-moving, high visibility events; for example, the announcement on Soviet TV of a change in that country's leadership; the fall of the Craxi Government; and the Achille Lauro hijacking. DI analysis and reporting on each of these events would have been delayed or less comprehensive if foreign TV had not been available.

Page 60, Paragraph 1: Information included in this paragraph is incorrect. Since October 1985 OCR has had a full-time librarian/indexing specialist researching the indexing, storage and retrieval problems that massive quantities of foreign TV present. During 1986 OCR will take steps to serve DI research needs with implementation of a TV storage and retrieval system.

Page 61, Paragraph 2: Some of the processing and all of the storage and retrieval of foreign TV are OCR functions. Providing these services will be costly and labor intensive. OCR has increased the size and capabilities of its TV unit, and it is doing considerable research on video storage and retrieval before upgrading its current system or deciding to purchase or develop a new one.

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DDI- 00343/86

22 January 1986

NOTE TO: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM: [redacted] Director of Central Reference

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SUBJECT: IG Draft Inspection Report of FBIS

1. Attached for your signature is a response to the IG on the inspection report of FBIS. Issues of concern to the DI are in Chapter IX (foreign TV) and on Page 53 of Chapter VIII (field operations) which deals with foreign data bases.

2. I recommend you endorse the two recommendations in Chapter IX and the one suggestion in Chapter VIII. These three proposals, in effect, call for more coordination between the DI and FBIS in the collection of foreign TV and in accessing foreign data bases. The IG team concludes that FBIS moved out too fast in responding to DI requirements for foreign TV. While we might take issue with this conclusion as it applies to Soviet TV, I believe the IG team may be correct when we consider TV collection on a worldwide basis. And, it is time to define OCR and FBIS responsibilities with regard to foreign data bases to ensure that DI analysts get what they need and to avoid redundancy.

3. The IG report takes a somewhat skeptical view of the value of foreign TV, or at least a less optimistic view than many DI analysts would have. This is still an open question, however. As you know, our report to you in July 1985 indicated that foreign TV was a valuable source for some forms of finished intelligence and that we would take a second reading of its usefulness in early 1986. We will have that report to you in two weeks; it will probably have basically the same message as before--the value of foreign TV will vary from high to marginal depending on geographic region, substantive topic, and timeliness as well as the language capabilities of analysts. In view of the cost implications of collecting, storing, retrieving, and indexing TV, I believe it is appropriate to have a joint DI-FBIS task force to establish foreign TV requirements.

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Attachment

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